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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 002664

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [GR](#) [CY](#) [TU](#) [PINR](#)

SUBJECT: TURKISH MILITARY WANTED YES/NO CYPRUS OUTCOME

REF: ANKARA 2204

(U) Classified by DCM Robert S. Deutsch. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: The Turkish General Staff is appreciative of US and UK assistance in forging a balanced although problematic Cyprus plan. TGS wanted the yes/no outcome from the referenda, although it has no clear idea of where to go from here. The Turkish military worries that Cyprus might use its EU membership (or be used by others) to block Turkey's accession. End Summary.

2. (C) TGS wanted a positive vote on the Annan Plan in northern Cyprus and a negative vote in the south, according to TGS/J5 Greece/Cyprus Chief RADM Mucahit Sislioglu (please protect). He told PolMilCouns May 10 that while the Turkish military was satisfied with the security provisions of the plan, there were problems with other parts of the plan and implementing it would have been "difficult." The biggest worry for TGS was the cost (both financial and in human terms) of relocating Turkish Cypriots displaced by land returns. However, TGS did not oppose the plan because relocations were mainly a matter for the government and not the military to handle, and because TGS calculated that Greek Cypriots would reject the plan. In fact, Sislioglu said he told Prime Minister Erdogan in Switzerland in the final days of the negotiation that the security provisions would likely increase the no vote in the south by 20% and increase the yes vote in the north by 15%. Nonetheless, Erdogan and Foreign Minister Gul hoped that the plan would pass on both sides of the island.

3. (C) Recalling TGS Chief Gen Ozkok's April 13 press conference (reftel), Sislioglu said Ozkok had not wanted to address the issue in public. Nonetheless, he was under considerable pressure from "people" who wanted to know TGS's position. Sislioglu said that he personally drafted Ozkok's remarks which emphasized the negative aspects of the agreement, but anticipated that the statement would prompt a question about the positive aspects and prepared Ozkok for it. He said he chose to emphasize the negative because the public and the government needed to realize and prepare for the difficulties that laid ahead in the event the plan was adopted. At the same time, the positive security aspects of the plan in the answer to the inevitable question would worry the Greek Cypriots and reassure the Turkish Cypriots.

4. (C) Comment: Sislioglu, Ozkok and TGS Deputy Chief Basbug were the only military officers who knew everything the military was doing with the government and in the negotiations. (Sislioglu lamented that his Cyprus staff didn't have enough English to be useful, so he was "working like a lieutenant," drafting papers, briefing the NSC, and negotiating the security aspects of the agreement.) Last April, there were as many "people" pressing for an explanation of TGS's policy on Cyprus in the military as outside it. Sislioglu admitted that Ozkok's words were chosen carefully to send messages to several groups. These included not only to the GOT and Greek Cypriots, but the Turkish military as well. End comment.

5. (C) Sislioglu was complementary of the AK Party government, noting that the negotiations turned out the way they did largely due to the strong political decisions made by the government. He noted that although the plan had elements that the military did not like, it was the product of a negotiation in which both sides had to compromise. He agreed that the final product was a balanced agreement. He expressed appreciation for the assistance of both the USG and HMG; while Washington and London's help was not evident at the beginning of the process, he said, it was quite clear in Switzerland that both governments were working hard to be helpful.

6. (C) Sislioglu was not sure of the way ahead. He worried that as time goes on, anger at the GOC for opposing the plan would fade and the diplomatic advantages Turkey and Turkish

Cypriots had gained from supporting it would evaporate. Nicosia now had a stronger hand by virtue of its EU membership and could cause problems for Turkey's EU aspirations. For example, France might hide behind Cyprus to keep Turkey from getting an accession negotiation date in December, he feared.

17. (C) Comment: Sislioglu appeared to admire PM Erdogan and his government's decisiveness on the Cyprus issue while being critical of the government's acceptance of territorial concessions. Although the military appears to have been prepared to back the Annan Plan, it was with some reluctance. We expect the military would resist any further concessions if negotiations were reopened. End comment.

EDELMAN